## SENATE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

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## SENATE DEMS LAUNCH HEARINGS ON KIDS & ADULT-RATED VIDEO GAMES

## **Governor Granholm to Testify**

LANSING- Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm is among those scheduled to testify before a Senate Democratic panel studying the relationship between adult-rated video games and children. The Democrats will be inviting parents, educators, researchers, law enforcement officials, public health officials, and even kids to talk about how to keep excessively violent or sexually explicit games out of the hands of children.

"We have a responsibility to provide Michigans parents with the tools they need to keep their children safe," said Sen. Mark Schauer (D-Battle Creek). "These hearings are designed to help us determine the best way to protect our kids from excessively violent or sexually explicit material."

To make their point, Senate Democrats provided members of the media with a summary of over 1,000 medical studies that have shown a connection between extended exposure to violent imagery and behavioral changes in children. The Senate Democrats are also preparing a video presentation for the hearings that will show clips from some of the most popular adult-rated games on the market today. Those who have seen the video describe it as "disturbing."

"We have come a long way since the days of Pac Man and Super Mario Brothers," said Sen. Deb Cherry (D-Burton). "Some of today's mature-rated games are far too violent or sexually explicit for most adults to tolerate. Children should not be able to legally purchase this material on their own."

A coalition of Senate Democrats are promoting legislation, sponsored by State Senator Hansen Clarke (D-Detroit), that would prohibit the sale or rental of "M" (Mature) or "AO" (Adult Only) video games to children. The Democrats expect the hearings to help increase public support for the measure.

"Businesses that are already behaving responsibly toward our children have nothing to fear from this legislation," said Sen. Hansen Clarke (D-Detroit). "It's only those few businesses that aren't taking their responsibility to the public seriously that would be impacted."

The Senate Democratic hearings are scheduled for April 25<sup>th</sup> in Lansing, May 6<sup>th</sup> in Detroit, May 16<sup>th</sup> in Bay City, and June 8<sup>th</sup> in Grand Rapids. The designated host senator(s) will be releasing more detailed time/location information.